

# Government Administration and Elections Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** HB-5530 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF ABSENTEE BALLOT ACCESS IN  
**Title:** UNCONSOLIDATED CITIES AND BOROUGHES WITHIN A TOWN.

**Vote Date:** 3/23/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/13/2026

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

### SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Government Administration and Elections Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

The City of Groton moved their elections from May to November and they experienced a problem with accessing absentee ballots from the Secretary of State's (SOTS) website. When you select the option of Groton on the website it only allows you to select the ballot for the City of Groton when you are actually able to vote both in the City and Town elections. The bill tries to study this issue with SOTS to try to alleviate this issue before the next election which would happen in 2027.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Ryan M. Burns, Executive Director and General Counsel, State Elections Enforcement](#)

**Commission:** testified with general comments, providing technical feedback and recommending clarifications to statutory language, enforcement mechanisms, and administrative processes. He suggested including SEEC on the task force to ensure absentee ballot policies maintain strong oversight and preserve the quality of evidence needed for investigations, while emphasizing the agency's willingness to assist the committee.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[State Representative, Dan Gaiewski:](#) testified in support of the bill, citing issues in Groton where voters cannot easily access absentee ballots for city elections through the state system, and supporting the bill to study and improve accessibility and clarity.

**John Burt, Town Manager, Town of Groton:** testified in support of the bill stating that it would address challenges faced by voters in unconsolidated cities who cannot use the state’s online system and would help improve accessibility while allowing for a thoughtful study of administrative and legal barriers.

**Dani Baycura, City Clerk, City of Groton:** testified in support, highlighting confusion and administrative challenges caused by the inability of city voters to use the state’s online absentee ballot system, and supporting the bill to study and improve the process.

**Juliette Parker, Mayor, Town of Groton:** testified in support, stating the bill would address barriers faced by voters in unconsolidated cities who cannot use the state’s online absentee ballot system, and would allow for a thoughtful study to improve accessibility while maintaining election security.

**Jill Rusk, Mayor, City of Groton:** testified in support, highlighting confusion in the current absentee ballot system where online requests do not cover all eligible elections, and supporting the bill to study solutions that improve clarity, accessibility, and coordination for voters and election officials.

**Karl Victorino, Student, CT State Community College:** testified in support, explaining that barriers to in-person voting, especially for busy and commuting students, can discourage participation, and emphasizing that expanding online absentee ballot access would improve accessibility and consistency for young voters.

**Irene Weiss, Past President, League of Women Voters of Southeastern Connecticut:** testified in support, emphasizing equal access to absentee ballots for voters in unconsolidated cities and boroughs, and noting it could increase participation, especially in local elections.

**Jess Zaccagnino, Policy Counsel, ACLU of Connecticut:** testified in support, emphasizing the importance of expanding voting access, including studying absentee ballot access in unconsolidated areas, improving election worker support, and increasing overall voter participation.

**Dana Semeraro:** testified in support, emphasizing the importance of online absentee ballot access, especially for older residents with limited mobility, to ensure equal voting access across Connecticut.

**Carol Rizzolo:** Supports this bill.

**Carol Williams:** Supports this bill.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Mike DiFanco:** testified in opposition, emphasizing that in-person voting with ID is important to prevent fraud, arguing most voters can reasonably appear in person, and stressing the value of maintaining election integrity.

[Anonymous 135](#): Opposes this bill.

[Anonymous 95](#): Opposes this bill.

[Anonymous 94](#): Opposes this bill

**Reported by: Michael Hamann**

**Date: 3/31/26**